

The Llewellyn School and Nursery

Annexe No 11 Cliffe Avenue, Westbrook, Margate, Kent CT9 5DU

Inspection dates

3–5 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Some striking and important strengths of this new school outweigh the relative weaknesses that, in most cases, the proprietor is already tackling.
- The Llewellyn School and Nursery is a very happy and positive place to spend time. Staff morale is high. Parents and carers are understandably very positive about what the school offers their children.
- Children and pupils love coming to school and spending time in the highly nurturing and caring environment. Dedicated staff attend diligently to pupils' needs.
- Pupils achieve well. According to their individual needs, at times they take some remarkable steps in their development. At other times, progress is understandably much more gradual, but still noteworthy.
- Through the effective teaching and curriculum, the school meets pupils' needs well overall. However, staff are not consistently as precise and skilful as they could be at challenging pupils according to their individual capabilities. The most able children and pupils could do better academically.
- The considerable care and respect for pupils shown by staff contributes well to pupils' strong personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- Leaders have wisely realised the potential benefits of involving all frontline staff more in strategies aimed at meeting pupils' different needs even more fully. This important work is planned but at an early stage.
- Passionate and determined leadership has secured a good quality of education for children and pupils. However, now that the school is established, the approach and tools aimed at securing continuous improvement are not as sharp and well informed as they could be.
- The newly formed governing body is not yet properly established to provide effective governance.
- Although all the independent school standards are met, the systematic oversight that this is continuously so is not as tight as it could be.
- Important written policies all meet requirements, but do not always fully reflect the school's specific context

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen strategic leadership and governance by:
 - sharpening systems for checking the effectiveness of the school and promoting further improvement
 - properly establishing the governing body and clarifying exactly what part it will play
 - reinforcing systems for checking that all standards and requirements are continuously met
 - refining policies so that they fully reflect the school's context and pupils' special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Involve staff more in planning how to meet pupils' needs even more fully and assessing their progress, including being mindful of the potential of the most able children and pupils.
- Develop the skills of staff so that overall the team makes the most effective use of time to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils, particularly the most able.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The proprietor, who is also the headteacher, provides inspirational leadership. Although sometimes unnecessarily modest, she candidly recognises both the potential and the limits of her own knowledge, expertise and experience. Consequently, she has gathered a close-knit but expanding team to support her.
- With incredible vision and intimate knowledge of the needs of children who have disabilities, the proprietor has made the most of a relatively confined space. Inside and outside areas have been carefully designed and equipped to a very high standard.
- The headteacher has a realistic understanding of the school's current effectiveness. There is absolutely no complacency; rather, there is a tireless enthusiasm to improve. As one staff member rightly observed: 'The management team is fully dedicated to making this school successful.'
- Morale is high, and staff are effusive in their praise for the school. Staff speak proudly of the 'fantastic ethos' that is truly and deeply established.
- A high priority is given to the training and development of all staff. At times, parents of pupils also take part in helpful training, just one example of the strong links that exist between home and school.
- Leaders have generally high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They are particularly strong advocates for those with the highest levels of need. However, although pupils achieve well overall, most-able pupils are not always helped to make the best possible progress academically.
- A rich and varied range of activities make the curriculum exciting and enjoyable. Frequent opportunities for art, music, horse riding and hydrotherapy, for example, are not only enjoyable for pupils, but valuable for their development. Leaders are currently wisely redesigning the curriculum to ensure that it continues to meet fully pupils' different needs as their interests, and their ages, change.
- The school makes effective use of the locality. Just during the inspection, pupils enjoyed trips to the lifeboat station and local library. Staff are imminently to receive specialist training so that they can make the most of the local beach as a learning resource.
- The varied activities and positive example set by staff help to immerse pupils in an environment consistent with fundamental British values. Effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the daily activities. However, leaders recognise that more could be done to expand pupils' multicultural experiences.
- Leaders and staff maintain strong communication with parents through daily conversations and, for some pupils, their contact books. Staff encourage, value and respect parents' views about their children's needs and best interests. Leaders recognise the scope to involve parents even more in assessing pupils' progress.
- Although improving, the sort of expert strategic leadership that will support the school to fully realise leaders' ambitions is not strongly established. Important tools that could better support the school's improvement are not as tight and focused as they could be,

including the improvement plan and leaders' own checks on the school's effectiveness. Nevertheless, in the relatively short period the school has been operating, leaders have secured a good quality of education for pupils.

Governance

- Governance is in its infancy. The proprietor has recently gathered together a small group of governors, but, to date, they have only had one meeting.
- At this stage, the exact role and function of the governing body is not clear. This has not been properly explored or determined. The proprietor recognises that governors could play a useful role in the oversight of the independent school standards, but they are not currently well placed to do this.
- All the independent school standards are met. However, the proprietor's checks that all the standards are consistently met are not as systematic, reliable and failsafe as they could be to avoid minor, occasional lapses. The proprietor has plausible plans for how to tighten checks against the standards, and this is an important priority.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The culture of care, nurture and protection of pupils' safety and well-being is strong. Staff work very closely with parents and a wide range of other professionals to this end.
- The environment, inside and out, is exceptionally well kept and maintained. Detailed and effective risk assessments cover a wide range of areas and activities, as well as considering the needs of specific pupils where necessary, to ensure that all are kept safe and protected.
- The single central record of all the checks carried out on the suitability of adults employed at the school meets all requirements. Staff are well trained so that they understand and act on their obligations and duties.
- The school's safeguarding policy, published on its website, takes the necessary account of a range of relevant guidance. Important information is precise and easy to find. The policy contains information about safeguarding pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. However, leaders recognise that more could be done to ensure that the policy fully reflects the specific context of the school and the additional vulnerabilities of the pupils it serves.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Daily routines are very well established and supported by cohesive teamwork. This plays an important part in helping pupils feel safe, secure and confident in their surroundings.
- Excellent relationships exist between staff and pupils. Interactions are warm, friendly and encouraging. These are kept mindfully within appropriate boundaries, especially regarding the extent and nature of physical contact.
- All staff show incredible care, attentiveness, compassion and respect in their dealings with children and pupils. Although the dedication and patience shown by staff should not be underestimated, this is so natural on the surface, that it appears effortless to the

observer.

- Throughout the day, adults are very positive role models for pupils. The uplifting early morning singing session is successful because adults show pupils how to join in and help them to enjoy it too.
- Adults are successful in either encouraging pupils' independence or taking deliberate action to lay the foundations for their future developing independence. Adults are habitually mindful of the importance of encouraging pupils' positive attitudes by gradually reducing their dependence and getting them involved wherever possible. For example, they instinctively involve pupils in any way they are able in helping to set up activities.
- Recent efforts to use symbols more effectively to aid pupils' communication are going well. Some adults are effective at supplementing these techniques with verbal questions or commands to check pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. Others are less skilful or experienced in tailoring this support for individual pupils, including in challenging the most able pupils.
- Adults readily engage pupils in purposeful and enjoyable activity. Pupils' individual needs are mostly met well to enable them to make good progress. However, staff working daily with pupils are not sufficiently involved in setting pupils' targets, planning for how best to meet the targets, or reviewing pupils' progress. Consequently, they are not consistently adept at using this information in the heat of the moment to make the best possible use both of time and of each activity.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school premises are like a hidden oasis behind the residential street where the school is situated. It is understandably somewhere that pupils love to come to. The atmosphere and environment are warm and inviting. Available space has been thoughtfully organised to meet pupils' needs, as well as enabling and celebrating their achievements.
- Very attentive and well-trained staff take care of pupils' daily personal, emotional, physical and medical needs, enabling them to attend school more easily. Extensive specialist equipment is used skilfully to support the inclusion and well-being of pupils. Some parents spoke movingly about the school being the first and only place they have trusted in which to leave their children.
- Although a reasonably complex operation sits beneath the surface, the smooth running of lunchtimes creates a relaxed and happy atmosphere for pupils. Adults encourage positive interactions between pupils, ensuring that, where possible, dining is also a social time.
- Pupils evidently feel safe and secure in the school's environment. However, some important policies do not take full account, either of the school's context, or pupils' SEN and/or disabilities. This includes, for example, the anti-bullying policy, although there have been no issues with bullying to date that have put this policy to the test.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most pupils behave well and join in enthusiastically with the various activities. Over time, the school is successful in improving the behaviour and attitudes of pupils who, for various and often complex reasons, find it harder to settle and positively engage.
- Overall, attendance is impressively high, particularly considering the school's special category and context.
- Some staff are very adept at engaging pupils who are reluctant to take part in the planned activities, or whose behaviour is challenging. Other staff lack the confidence or repertoire of effective strategies to be as successful as they could be.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress overall. Although steps pupils take are sometimes seemingly small (based on their prior capabilities), for the individual, their steps can be significant and noteworthy.
- Some of the most important steps pupils take are in their abilities to communicate. This may be to indicate a choice between two things but may extend to broader choices or feelings. Adults are sensitive to subtle indicators pupils may show, but also actively use a variety of strategies to help pupils express themselves.
- Pupils make good progress in their personal and social development, including developing early independence relative to their capabilities. Leaders have begun useful work to track and target the early stages, skills and attributes that lay the foundations of successful engagement and inclusion in the community.
- For many pupils, the progress they make with their physical development is more gradual, but still notable. At times their progress is quite remarkable.
- Early years children and older pupils enjoy joining in with familiar songs, both vocally and bodily. They learn and anticipate repeating parts, and demonstrate sensitivity to the mood of the music. Pupils also begin to develop positive habits through sharing books with adults in the comfort of the book corner or their preferred environment. If appropriate for their stage of development, older pupils are taught phonics.
- The school makes every effort to act diligently, in the best interests of pupils, on advice from a range of professionals and specialists. Current, well-conceived work to involve frontline staff more in assessing pupils' progress is an important and necessary step to further improve pupils' outcomes.
- The most able children and pupils make similarly good progress to others in many aspects of their development. However, sometimes they could be capable academically of more, including further developing their language skills.

School details

Unique reference number	142859
DfE registration number	886/6143
Inspection number	10044146

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	7
Number of part-time pupils	4
Proprietor	Sara Llewellyn
Chair	Diane Springett
Headteacher	Sara Llewellyn
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,000–£80,000
Telephone number	07855 458 037
Website	www.thellewellynschoolandnursery.co.uk
Email address	info.llewellynschool@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Llewellyn School and Nursery occupies two annexes and outside space of residential premises in Margate, Kent.
- The school caters mostly for pupils who have severe learning difficulties, and who also have multisensory, communication and physical development needs. All pupils have, or are in the process of obtaining, an education, health and care plan.
- This is a very small school. Although individually supported, the very low numbers of both primary-aged pupils and early years children often take part in similar activities together. Consequently, they are not reported in separate sections in this report. The school is

registered to take children from the age of two, although at the time of this inspection, the early years children were older.

- For part of its curriculum, the school uses off-site facilities, including a nearby hydrotherapy pool and riding centre.
- The proprietor is also the headteacher. The proprietor is in the process of establishing a small governing body. Its precise role and function has not yet been determined.
- This was the school's first full standard inspection. The school was registered by the Department for Education in January 2017.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed the daily work of the school throughout his visit.
- He spent various periods carrying out focused observations of activities, mostly alongside the lead practitioner.
- During the inspection, the inspector held a range of formal and informal discussions with staff, leaders and parents. He also interacted with pupils.
- The inspector reviewed the school's assessments and records of pupils' progress.
- He considered one response to Ofsted's online survey Parent View, and eight confidential questionnaires returned by staff.
- Before and during the inspection, he scrutinised a wide range of documentation relating to the independent school standards, safeguarding and the quality of education.

Inspection team

Clive Dunn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018